

MEMOIRS OF MARY MILLS

Wilmington College Days





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Compiled by her nephew, B. M. Hiatt, from her diary and other sources for her family, friends, and former students.

May, 1968

Mary Mills was born January 21, 1873, the daughter of Judge Levi and Ruth Mills. In 1892 she graduated from Wilmington College and later received A.B. and A.M. degrees from the University of Chicago. After teaching a few years in Friends' Academies and other secondary schools, she became instructor in English Literature at Wilmington College, where she taught for twenty years.

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Upon leaving the local grade school, I was surprised when I was told that instead of going to High School I was to enter the preparatory department of Wilmington College in the fall of 1888. The reason for this change of plan was never discussed openly in the family, but I suspected my parents feared that some of the skull-duggery that characterized the grades might continue in the public High School.

So the scene of my secondary education was made of ten acres of fine trees, a belfry with a sonorous bell, and fifty-five students both college and preparatory, covering a wide range, since some of them were taking advanced college work. When not in recitation we all sat together in the Study Room. The high ceiling of this constantly used hall was supported by two unbarked varnished tree trunks that gave the place a rustic appearance. On two sides of the room were barrel shaped iron stoves flanked by big coal boxes from which student janitors fueled the heaters. If your desk was located near a stove, you got uncomfortably warm because the students who sat in the middle of the room far from the heat had the privilege of adding fresh fuel whenever they liked and of stirring the hot coals with long iron pokers. My seat was in the second row from the east stove so I kept good and warm. In this study hall you had the privilege of asking help on your lessons from the teacher in charge or you could even whisper to fellow students presumably about lesson problems. It was, however, easy to place your Latin book on the desk of your supposed helper, put your finger on the difficult passage and discuss matters far remote from Caesar's conquest of three-part Gaul.

Every morning in the study room at the college we had collection and received instruction for the day. Each pupil had a Latin numeral and we recited these in rapid rotation for roll-call. My number unfortunately was quattuor decem and I often had to shout this breathlessly after a dashing sprint from some remote quarter. The different faculty members gave talks each morning of the week.

When we were not reciting in the class rooms we were in the study room under the eye of a member of the faculty.

"Twas a pleasant place to study,
Twas a better place to dream
When through the door at Springtime
We could watch the sunlight gleam
On the faint green of the tree tops.
There our thoughts serene could roam
Till the clanging recitation bell

Would bring us rudely home.
For the stern clock never faltered
As it ticked the flight of years
That have fulfilled our cherished hopes
And realized our fears.
They have made changes in the class rooms,
Beautified the upper hall,
But the old and battered study room
Is the dearest place of all."

* * *

President Unthank frowned upon romance in his chapel talks but Teacher Ellen on the other hand, glorified affection. She was pleased with the number of weddings that had taken place among the students and pointed with pride to the fact that there were no divorces.

The college boys and girls were dressed in a very plain manner. I looked as well as anybody and my dresses were made out of old family garments or of ordinary calico.

As students we had our weaknesses. I was once caught cheating on a geometry examination. I was reported by a young man who had borrowed my material and then accused me. I denied it. After I had spent days of agony I went to the professor and told him the truth and the dear saint forgave me.

However, this incident may have still remained in the memory of Teacher Ellen. Fourteen years after my graduation it was suggested to the faculty that I should be offered a position as teacher in the college. In the committee Teacher Ellen said that she thought it would be a mistake to employ me because I could never attain any kind of professorial dignity.

Every spring President Unthank would make a speech in convocation to warn us about "puppy love" as he called it. He would make fun of the green light that flashed in the eyes of the young men and young women when the green leaves came out on the trees. This was received in silence by the classmates of his daughter. There were only enough seats in the room for the students and if company attended the convocation some of them had to double up two in a seat. The president's daughter was one of the first to be thrown together with a boy in one seat where it was possible for eyes to get very green.

When a student was called before the president for an interview it was the habit of Mr. Unthank to point out the grammatical errors in his conversation as well as the errors in his conduct.

There were at that time no compulsory education laws and no standardization of the road from a humble country home to a college degree.

For this reason many of the early students at Wilmington College were irregular in their preparation. Therefore, the college permitted students to enter

the preparatory department without examination. Their ability to carry the work was taken as evidence that the past work of the course had been faithfully done.

The preparatory department in my time had more students than the collegiate department. This was because there were very few public high schools near the rural schools and many students never went beyond the eighth grade unless their parents sent their children to the preparatory department of the college.

The upper classes in the college had the privilege of going up and down stairs between classes to their recitation rooms and laboratories.

The pupils in the preparatory department were not permitted to come and go between classes but were held in the study room, which was also the college chapel.

* * *

When I first came to Wilmington College the number of pupils was so small that the president was the one to whom we were sent for disciplinary reasons. If anyone on the board of trustees heard of a breach of discipline on the part of a pupil, they went to the president. They held him responsible for any breach of the rules and in those days there were a great many forbidden diversions, such as playing cards, or smoking a cigarette, or not getting in the dormitory until after the bell sounded.

Sometimes the pranks and wiles and forbidden diversions would happen in bunches. The girls' hall of Twin Ash had a matron and the boys' South Hall had a governor, but in those days the culprit was sent to the president's office. The college board expected him to interview the culprit, to investigate the situation, and also to teach some classes. Things just would happen in clusters on some days. Some visitor on business would be in consultation with the president in his office and two or three pranksters would be sitting outside of the door awaiting their turn.

The janitor of the college who swept the main building had a big job on his hands. Before a furnace was installed in the cellar under the building, the heating was done by eighteen fireplaces on the three floors. The janitor carried the coal to the fireplaces, kindled it, and cleaned out the ashes and soot.

Jack Gans, the janitor, wore a bandanna handkerchief on his nose to protect his nose and lungs from the dust when he swept the uncarpeted floors.

In the vacation season in the summertime, the janitor mowed the grass on the campus by hitching an old horse to a sickle-type mower.

The janitor had the privilege in the summer of pasturing his horse on the campus and of retaining the hay to feed the animal through the winter.

One day soon after college convened, the old horse was discovered on the second floor of the college building in one of the classrooms. Evidently, this passive steed could be led up a flight of stairs but when he gazed down the steps he refused to descend. He was stabled in one of the classrooms for a night and a

day. No one seemed to know who led him up there or who could get him down. His presence in the room played havoc with the student morale.

The faculty appealed to the town marshall who was responsible for removing animals on the streets. He backed the horse downstairs to the first floor and out to his pasture again.

We never knew who led the old horse up the stairs.

* * *

Soon after the opening of the college year there was always a get-together party to stimulate a feeling of social solidarity. It was held on the third floor. If a girl was lucky, some boy took her and the smiling couple ostentatiously entered the hall. If some poor girl was without escort she tried to slip in with some sheltering group. The program began with a grand march. The Master of Ceremonies, with bell in hand, asked the girls to form one line, the boys another, each boy beside some girl. They would walk together until the bell sounded its warning and then the boy would step back to be the partner of another girl.

There was something fascinating about the rhythmic sound of so many feet walking on the bare boards in unison. When the shyness had worn off a bit, the girl would take her partner's arm. It was always my lot, for long intervals at a time to try to hang gracefully to the sleeve of a boy who would not bend his arm, but froze it stiffly by his side. I grasped at it, and hung on like a limpet until a long stretch of the grand march was over!

If a girl lived in town a boy might ask to walk home with her, but there was little dalliance on the way, for the girl, believe it or not, would usually choose the shortest route. One popular Miss was asked one red letter day, by three different boys to be allowed to walk home with her. Thrilled with her conquests she accepted all three offers, but appointed a different hour to each swain. She went home accompanied by the first suitor; then walked back to the College to pick up the second lad, then went back again for the third suppliant. As she lived a mile from the College it was estimated that she walked at least five miles that evening and set a long distance record.

When I went to college there was a fence around the campus with a turn-stile at the entrance to the walk up to the building.

The trustees of the college considered this fence necessary on account of the droves of cattle that passed. The college was located at the junction of the road from Washington Court House and the road from Hillsboro. Large droves of cattle or hogs were driven to market over these roads and herded by men on horses with long black snake whips. If there had been no fence around the college grounds the herds had a tendency at this point to veer down the grassy slope into the campus. Hence the turn-stile.

In those days it was customary for each family to keep a cow for a supply of fresh milk. The trustees had rented a portion of the back campus to Amos Todhunter to pasture his cow.

It happened that this cow pasture was coveted by the college boys as the most suitable place for a baseball field. There were only two obstacles - one was that right field was too short on account of the fence around the cow pasture and the other was that left field was too short on account of a beech tree.

The posts of the fence around the cow pasture were found one morning lifted out of the ground. Layton Todhunter, the son of Amos Todhunter had secretly helped dig them up. The next day he helped his father put the posts back. The next night he helped dig them up and the next day helped his father replace them. This went on for three days until his father gave up and Layton got some rest from his double shift.

The next thing that happened was that the beech tree disappeared. The trustees then brought pressure on the baseball boys who replied with the following letter:

"To the Trustees-Gentlemen: In order to clear our baseball field of all obstructions, we made the mistake of cutting down what we considered a worthless beech tree. We acknowledge our error in doing this without your permission. We assure you that we had no intention of wantonly destroying property. Our motive was to have a baseball field of regulation size without obstruction.

We shall do what we can to repair the loss by planting a number of trees on other parts of the campus under the direction of the president of the college.

Yours Respectfully,

Baseball Team"

* * *

The girls decided to have a meeting to discuss the details of our graduation, such as our dresses and bouquets and hair ribbons, etc. Everybody talked at once and I was impatient because I could not get the floor. I tried to call attention to myself as if I could give the final word to the problems. Some of the girls were unquenchable conversationalists.

When there was a slight pause I began to say "My idea is" but no one listened. At the next quiet moment I said "I always say" but my voice was drowned out.

I was about to give up when an unexpected pause came in the babble and I took the floor and I jumped in the gap with my voice without the slightest idea of what I was going to say. I shut my eyes and pulled the trigger. It turned out that the girls had already agreed on this point. The target was no longer in dispute. My assertion was shouted down by all of the other girls.

There was in the group my friend Eva McKenzie who was interested in peoples' secret thoughts and she would listen with respect to the opinions

that she did not share. She was willing to gnaw an unpromising bone for friendship's sake. After persons had talked to her they felt that they had expressed themselves better than they had been able to explain it before. She demonstrated that there can be deferences between two persons whose minds were of opposite types.

In those days a majority of the population lived in the country on farms where conversation was confined to a small group of relatives for several days of the week. There were no telephones or other means of communication. Some farm families hitched up and drove to town on Saturdays when they needed only a wick for a coal oil lamp or a box of matches, but they did get a chance for conversing with some one outside the family circle.

I discovered that conversation is the one thing in which all human beings are competitors.

But an idea occurred to me when several of my schoolmates were talking all at once about where our class would gather to march into the building. It occurred to me that I could get attention on the topic of the weather. What would we do in case of rain? There was a silence and I got into the conversation while my rivals were coming up for air. Since then I have often used that topic of the weather to gain oral leadership and a chance to talk.

* * *

Before a student received a diploma he had to prepare and present publicly an original oration. These orations showed a wide and profound knowledge of the world and of life. Some of the titles of our masterpieces were as follows: Influences, The Unwritten, Illiteracy America's Great Peril, Why, Ladders, The Eyes of the World are Upon Us. My oration had the high sounding title "The Selfish and the Social". I can't remember a word of it, but I presume I classified myself with the social. I think we all practiced a little plagiarism. I distinctly remember with affection a large red-backed book of father's entitled "Solitary and the Social".

The girls in our class all had fluffy new dresses and struggled to achieve a mature harmony. An old student gave the address, but no one heard it for suddenly a cloud burst erupted with thunder and lightning accompaniment. There was a stampede of farmers anxious to see to the safety of their horses so that few of the carriage trade were left for the finale. It was all tremendously exciting.

It was a tradition that friends of the graduates were to bring gifts, usually books or flowers, complimenting their favorites. After each oration ushers went back and forth in the audience collecting these offerings, which they placed on the stage at the feet of the recipients. The graduates who lived in Wilmington and who had many relatives were hidden by their loot, but those who lived in distant ports would lose out. This was a distressing partiality not only against the neglected graduates but for the pitying audience. By general agreement the practice of public giving of gifts was abandoned.

At the meeting of the alumni of Wilmington College in June, 1891, the project of lighting the college with electricity came up for discussion. The alumni pledged a hundred dollars. The work was to be done as much as possible by volunteer labor. One of the alumni, named Will Carroll, agreed to give three weeks to the installation of electricity. He could not give more than three weeks because he was studying law in Columbus, Ohio, and had work there to finish.

I was immediately attracted to this young man because I knew his sister and his mother, who was a widow. I admired both of them.

Several months later when the lights in the college building were turned on, this electricity was celebrated by a party at the college which included students, faculty, and friends to the number of three hundred persons. Will Carroll came down from Columbus to attend the party. The members of the social committee had written numbers on slips and these were distributed so that the young man could claim the company of the young lady who held the slip with the corresponding number. Will Carroll traded around with the boys until he got my number.

After that we corresponded regularly. The next fall I took a position as teacher in the Friends School at Kennett Square in Pennsylvania not far from the Atlantic Coast. To my surprise I received a letter from Will Carroll in California not far from the Pacific Coast. His letters were cheerful but it became apparent that he had withdrawn from the law school in Columbus, Ohio, on account of his health.

Later from his letters I knew that his journey to California had been futile. I knew that the tuberculosis sanatorium had been lonely. I knew from his hand writing that he was getting weary and weak. He was tired of sitting in an invalid chair. He had written that he preferred to creep in bed eternally. I knew that his mother and sister were on their way West. I knew that he would find comfort in his mother's arms.

Ten days later, after the funeral, I received his message enclosed in a letter from his sister.

I had told no one in Kennett Square about Will because no one there had known him. When I received the telegram from his sister I showed it to no one in the school and tried to get through the classroom routine with cheerfulness.

It became clear to me that after teaching a year in a Friends school I should make teaching my life occupation. To that end I must go to a university and get a degree that enabled me to teach in a college instead of in an elementary school.

* * *

When I was in the preparatory department of Wilmington College, there was a senior boy in the college department who was older than I was by several years but we were attracted to each other in spite of the gap in our ages. At noon time we would often meet and stroll together on the walks about the campus. He knew my parents and I knew his parents and they did not regard the walks of their

children as anything serious. But so far as I was concerned I was very much attached to him. As his graduation day approached we had walks oftener. He was a serious reader and we had what I regarded then as deep talks about literature and our favorite authors.

On Christmas, 1890, my senior friend surprised me by giving me a fine pair of opera glasses in a handsome case engraved "Mary - Dec. 25, 1890".

He stayed only a few minutes in our home. After he left I went out in the sitting room to show the gift to my mother.

She said, "Your face is all shining with joy. You love him don't you?"

I said, "Oh, I do, I do."

I had a part in his graduation. Although I was only a freshman I sat on the platform on alumni night and sang a solo.

At his commencement on the following morning I sang a part in a duet "As the Hart Pants."

Then I listened to his oration on the "Funeral Mounds at Fort Ancient". He and I had visited that mound.

Immediately after his commencement the boy left to join his father who, after his bankruptcy here, had moved to another State. The son and I kept up a correspondence. He wrote to me often.

* * *

In 1894, a year after the opening of the University of Chicago, I made a random selection of a course under an instructor named Thorstein Veblen. I had not notified him beforehand of my sudden intention to take his course. The schedule of classes said that Mr. Veblen's students would meet in the alcove of the former library. It turned out that there were only two of us in the class. The other student was a red haired robust sort of a woman whom I had seen in a dormitory where she was known by her habit of playing lustily on the piano and singing with rollicking voice "On the Road to Mandalay." She gave a realistic impression of the flying fishes playing and the dawn coming up like thunder out of China cross the bay! I think she had heard of Veblen before she came to Chicago, and knew what she was doing when she chose his class.

The other woman, whose name was Jane, asked him if our class would recite in this room regularly.

He replied that our meeting today was merely to show us where the class would be held and that we would meet here the next time. Then he quietly arose and left us.

Before Jane and I left the library I asked her some questions about our instructor.

Jane said that his name was Thorstein B. Veblen. He was born on a Wisconsin farm of Norwegian parents and had gone to Carleton College. He was primarily a research man but he taught a little to get money. As an instructor he gets only \$542 a year. He has no vocation for teaching and he does his best to

discourage students not to come to class. There is financial pressure on him to teach but he tries to avoid reading the papers of students or giving lectures. His ideal university would be one that had no students except research apprentices. She gave me some advice.

Don't take notes in the classroom. Don't ask him to repeat anything that he has said. When a student asks him to repeat something he replies that it was not worth repeating. He practices the arts of putting students off in every conceivable way because he seeks to spend as little of himself as possible in class.

I thanked Jane profoundly for this information and practiced her suggestions.

Throughout the term Jane and I attended Veblen's class in the library alcove. In this cubbyhole we always found Mr. Veblen already seated when we entered. The two of us sat on ordinary chairs immediately in front of Dr. Veblen. He did not seem at all interested in us. He was just doing a job. Jane asked questions while I regarded him with vague glassy eyes. His reserve was so great that Jane found it almost impossible to get from him any exact answers. He seemed to feel that students should follow their own bent of thinking and he hesitated to disclose his own views for fear he might influence your judgment. He made one feel, however, that he could get to the bottom of things.

I knew that anything that he said would be entirely over my head but I was fascinated by the personal style being so different from any mind that I had ever contacted.

I attended the course because of the rare occasions when he would open up on some subject that I had never heard of before.

He never gave us any quizzes or final examinations, but he did give both of us good final grades without requiring any papers.

I recall only a few things that Thorstein Veblen said and they were of a primitive nature. For instance he said that the styles of women's dresses were designed to be the most effective hindrance to useful exertion.

The adoption of the cap and gown in colleges was an atavistic return to remote generations and a striking feature in modern college life. He liked theoretical and high-brow specialties and avoided acquiring any personal assets or middle class values. He seemed to despise the common motives of men.

In the University of Chicago I often had a struggle over the burden of understanding. In John Dewey's class he put the burden on the pupils of whom he seemed almost totally unaware. The student hoped to sit back comfortably and drink in knowledge. But Dewey seemed indifferent to this hope, and assumed a "take it or leave it" attitude. His seeming indifference became so disturbing that the class, in caucus, decided to hire a stenographer to take down his lectures, so each one of us received at the end of the day a typewritten report of what Dr. Dewey had said. His method was to spend one half of the period lecturing, and the other half in examining some members of the class on the ideas he had presented the day before.

It was my fate to be one of the pupils called on to respond to his first inquisition. The question he asked dazed me, and what little I did know left me.

In this predicament I thought I might as well "come clean" so speaking in a loud clear voice to conceal my terror, I said "I have no idea what you were talking about. All those concepts, and precepts, and percepts, left nothing intelligible in my mind. I am bewildered by these "cepts" for they are new to me!"

Right then I learned that a big man is not insulted by a person who admits he is not on the same wave-length with his preceptor. He then asked me if the difficulty was that he was using words in one way while I was interpreting them in another. Without using a single CEPT I gave him my version of what he had said the previous day. It turned out that I had by-passed his main points but he seemed interested that I was trying to reach his meaning. I had miscalled the cards that he had laid on the table and that was humiliating to me, but I realized that there was some educational value in finding out that one had miscalled them. I decided it was better than silently assuming that you had them right.

Some members of the class were never asked to make clear their reactions to his lectures, but I was called upon every single recitation. Yes, every single time. Some members of the class looked very learned and I am sure had sense enough to realize what he was trying to impart. He was using me, I am convinced, as a guinea-pig for clarity. If it was clear to me he felt sure that the rest understood completely. At the end of the course I had not been brought very far into the area of awareness of what Prof. Dewey was dealing out to us. But I was not entirely outside the range of understanding. It demands patient questioning and an unexciting amount of listening to prevent the by-passing of minds, especially if one of the minds is somewhat lacking. At any rate I am sure he knew that I was in the class!

* * *

A fine example of teacher I found in Mr. George Vincent. His classes were very popular for the students realized that he was a genuinely learned man, very brilliant, but, at the same time "folksy". He was kind and courteous, and despite his crowded classes, seemed to look upon each pupil as an individual. He appeared happy to speak to you when he met you on a campus path. When he lectured you understood what he said. You felt free to go to him if you ever needed counsel for he made you feel special.

One Friday that preceded a crowded week-end, he asked us to hand in on Monday a case history showing the routes by which our ancestors traveled to their present destinations. I was in a quandary because I had never been too interested in any but my immediate fore-bears. And knew very little about them. Then too I was confronted by the fact that some members of the class had already extolled the super qualities of their family trees, one girl tracing her origin back, in an unbroken line, to an illustrious gentleman mentioned in Xenophon's Anabasis. This family hero had lived 435 years B.C. I felt that I had rugged competition since I could go no farther back than Grandpa McMillan and Grandma Cook. There was no time to write home for information, yet I refused to let my family down!

I provided myself with a suitable supply of maps and went to work. I decided to be of Scotch-Irish descent, so I, with all speed, brought my far-flung great-great-greats across the Atlantic not on the Mayflower but on the next ship. My maps were a help. I sent my dear ones whizzing hither and yon with alarming swiftness, and I must say they touched on all the highspots. I did my best by them.

I had not stopped to remember that the routes from the Atlantic Coast west, such as the National Road, the road through Cumberland Gap, or the road up the Mohawk Valley were the ones that nearly all the settlers used when they came through the Alleghenies. Also, I had not realized that the rate of settlement of the different cities was timed pretty definitely -- Also I had not remembered that according to my report, my ancestors arrived too early to take advantage of all or any of these possible roads of travel.

On the fatal Monday after Prof. Vincent had read aloud to the class several of the essays, he looked at me with a quizzical twinkle in his eyes and said that the travels of the families of the students had followed along the beaten paths with one notable exception. The family of Miss Mills had, in large measure, reversed the regular procedure and had carved out strange paths to reach at last a safe and quiet destination in Southern Ohio.

Bless him! Here was one educator distinguished, although not world renowned, who was on my wave length.

* * *

At the University of Chicago I tried very hard to make a good impression on my English teacher because English was my main interest. Also he was of the opinion that I might as well drop the course because the themes that I handed in were impossibly conventional. He told me that I had not learned "to paddle my own canoe". I refrained from retorting that the phrase "paddle my own canoe" which he had used was very conventional.

At last the time came when I was to take an oral examination for a master's degree. It was a hot summer day and a large room was filled with instructors who had come to Chicago this summer from all outlying communities to teach in the Summer School.

I was consumed with anxiety because I had never been in an oral examination and I knew that I would have no time for reflection. The questions were to cover the entire field of English literature.

My mind was an empty vessel. Should I call the examination off and tell the assembled wise men that I was sick at my stomach or should I let the inquisition proceed? I found that I was too weak to rise so I continued to sit.

In a short time a man with a sharp nose pounced on me and asked the date on which Walter Scott published his first novel. I sat in profound silence. He asked about the second novel. I remained mute. When he asked me about the third novel the worm turned.

I arose and spoke earnestly. "I know only two dates. In 1873 I was born

and in 1619 slavery was introduced into the United States. I can understand why I can remember the date 1873 but I have no reasonable excuse for remembering 1619 except that one of my ancestors had a flourishing station on the underground railroad.

"In regard to Scott's novels I do know something about their contents."

The heart of my inquisitor melted with pity and he told me that I could hand in a paper to the professor who was in charge of the class.

I did write a thesis on Scott and mailed it to the professor. But he went abroad without recording any grade for my term's work.

I needed that grade so I wrote to him in France. Because there were a great number of pupils in his class I was afraid that he would not remember me so I included a little picture of me in the envelope. He responded promptly and assured me that he had not forgotten me as a pupil in his class. He also enclosed a copy of the generous grade that he was having recorded at the university for me.

* * *

When I went to the University of Chicago I had not read much modern poetry. There I heard of a group of a half-dozen men in England who were seeking to change the standards of painting, home decoration, and women's styles. They found their historic background in the Medieval Art in the period before Raphael. They were called the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. They set out to change the current Arts and especially sought to thaw out the style of painting.

I bought a print of a painting by Dante Gabriel Rossetti and hung it in my room. These pre-Raphaelite Brothers also believed that painting and poetry went together. The picture was called "The Blessed Damozel" and Rossetti also supplied a poem with that title.

Three years later in 1896 I saw a slim volume of poems by Christina Rossetti a sister of the painter, and they made an impression on me. These sonnets seemed to reflect my personal need and they seemed to communicate with me much more than the poems of her famous brother. Miss Rossetti had died in 1894, two years previously, and these poems were found in her little notebooks. She lived the life of the genteel poor and took care of an invalid sister and three maiden aunts. Christina had her round of trivial household tasks, made scrapbooks for children, called on some charity cases and wrote poems in little tablets resting on the washstand in her bedroom. Like all the other ladies in the house she wore dark clothes and bonnets that were shaped like a coal scuttle.

Her writing was casual and she never spoke of her poems in her conversation.

On the evening of Christina Rossetti's death twelve little notebooks of her poems were discovered.

Her coffin was placed near a mantel where the twelve little notebooks were arranged three by three. Through the night of mourning they stood keeping watch over her like angels with outstretched wings. They were testimonies that she had transmitted suffering into ideas and illuminated her personal relationships into a

transcendence beyond time.

* * *

Another interesting event of my stay in Chicago was meeting Jane Addams, the distinguished hostess of Hull House which was the refuge for the friendless. She often visited the University of Chicago where her presence conferred distinction. She had a quiet unassuming dignity and was without any of the mannerisms of a reformer. Much of her influence came from the natural charm of her personality.

Men treated her with distinguished chivalry. In her personal appearance she was attractive but one saw in her no striving for beauty. In dress she had a style of her own. She was what you call a born lady.

On the occasion of one of her visits to the college campus she announced that there was to be a woman's suffrage parade and invited any who wished to participate. I never was a woman's rights advocate but I felt that it would be an honor to march with her and I signed up to join the procession.

Sad to relate I felt disappointed and let down. I had expected that we would be reviled, rebuffed and ridiculed every step of the way. I had cautioned myself to remain composed during the boozing. I had expected a barrage of vegetables amidst yowls of derision. We met with no such treatment. There were some appreciative whistles as the younger college co-eds marched by.

There were some cat-calls and jeers but most of the spectators were kindly and receptive. Even some men cheered as we swept down the streets bearing aloft our standards "Votes for Woman." Our American flags whipped vigorously in the breeze from the lake. I felt glad to be a woman and pleased to be in a group honored by the leadership of that peacefully militant gentle woman Jane Addams.

* * *

Several years later, just before I was to assume my position as a professor at Wilmington College, I went out to the study room to be all alone.

I sat in my old seat and the desk was still shaky and there was the same stain in the corner of the ceiling where the rain had marred the wall. There were the two stoves flanked by coal boxes. The same clock ticked on the wall.

But mainly my thoughts were on the senior student who had given me the opera glasses engraved "Mary - Dec. 25, 1890." I was only in the preparatory department when I met him and he was in the sophomore class of the college. During the noon hour we often met and walked along the paths on the campus. He was more serious and formal and I was more gushing and impulsive. I imagined that I would meet other men like him before I had finished college but I never did. It is strange that the infatuation of my life should come to me when I was just a young girl and expected that I would feel this way toward other men. After his graduation I wrote to him often while his letters were more restrained. When he was engaged to a lady of his own age, he wrote me promptly and gave me details

as though I were his sister.

* * *

At the college I usually had charge of the plays. I remember that at one time we desired to give "As You Like It" and one of the instructors demurred because he said that it was not fitting that Rosalind should wear men's clothes; that we were putting the feet of our young people on the path to perdition. One time when we were giving a play in the City Hall there was a cloud burst and the rain on the tin roof was so loud that the players couldn't hear each other speak but this noise was not at all evident in the audience. So there was the amazing situation of the pupils shouting when ordinary voice would have been easily understood. Another play that sticks in my mind had in it a barroom scene. I knew our audience would not stand for anything so scandalous so I tried to improve on Goldsmith by changing it to a coffee shop scene. This seemed very tepid so we finally decided to have a very mild barroom scene. There was nothing to drink but pop and ginger ale, but the young people threw themselves into their parts with such zest that the scene was one of the most ribald revelry and brought upon our innocent heads the condemnation of the Ministerial Association.

A boy whom we nicknamed Big Squirt Fisher entered school in the middle of the term. He did not know my method of reviewing the pupils in the Shakespearian classics, although the rest of the pupils were familiar with my routine. Without warning I would quote a passage from Shakespeare and they were to tell from what play it was taken and indicate the character speaking. The first day Big Squirt was in the class I leaned back, clutching my throat, and said, gaspingly "I pray thee, undo this button!" and my new pupil unwittingly strode up to the desk intending to give me the necessary relief from pain while the other children laughed vociferously. At another time we were studying the poem "Excelsior". I had put a box on the table and a chair on the box and every time they came to the word Excelsior I had one of the pupils climb up another step. A visitor in the class said to his friend as they left the room, "That woman is interesting all right, but I'm afraid she's crazy!" At another time we were reading "The Eve of St. Agnes". In one stanza there is a list of food as follows: "Of candied apple, quince and plum and gourd; with jellies smoother than the creamy curd, And recent syrups, tinct with cinnamon". I told the pupils that I didn't like the banquet the lover spread for his adored one. That I thought a slice of good country ham would be better than all the cloves and syrup. I added when questioned that I would pass anybody in any course if he would bring me a slice of good country ham. The next Monday everybody in the class came carrying in his hand a gift of ham. I was very fond of the mob scene from "Julius Caesar." We would always act it out. One year when I felt more than usually ambitious I decided to take the class to the third floor so we could whoop and yell properly and just as we were at our shouting best the door opened and there came in a delegation from England who had come to study the Quaker colleges in our country. What to do? I de-

cided that they couldn't be more shocked than they were already so I egged on my pupils to redoubled effort and the class ended in a knock down and drag out scene that was most effective.

In looking back over what I said to my students I fear that I depended upon my memory for jests rather than upon my presentation of facts. When they have said anything to me about the class I feel that I stressed the fanciful parts of the lesson but slighted the tangible information.

One play that I wrote myself had to be put on in the afternoon at the downtown theatre because they thought that nobody would come out to the college. Also it was decided to charge no admission because the total would be insignificant.

You never saw such a crowd. The play was to begin at two-thirty. I went there at one o'clock to arrange the stage and there were more than fifty people already in their seats. Before two o'clock every one of the five hundred seats was taken. The senior students had reserved seats for their relatives but the audience paid no attention at all to the reservations. We had intended to darken the theatre but the people filled all the doors and windows. Some persons brought chairs and sat outside the open doors in the alley. At least two hundred people stood up during the entire performance. The manager of the theatre said that at least two hundred people were turned away. There were not enough programs.

Rufus Jones of Philadelphia was one of the guests who attended the play and told me that I certainly must do something with it. But I never did.

In the same week I helped all that I could with the opera "Mikado" that the college gave in the uptown theatre. Over fifty people were in the cast and it was a very big undertaking. My niece, Ruth Esther, had the soprano leading part and every one said that her performance was brilliant. The preparation of the costumes and stage setting took a lot of time. I was behind the scenes and helped push the show along. On the same week there was the registration of a hundred students who had come for the spring term. They were for the most part teachers and they are very exacting in their work. It was a busy week for me.

* * *

The college pupils have been hit by the influenza epidemic. Nothing is normal here. Schools, churches, theatres, and all public gathering places are closed. Those who have already died have private funerals. This is a dismal place. The physicians are all dreadfully overworked, scarcely sleeping or eating.

Nearly every family has at least one member who is ill and in many all persons are ill.

I went this morning to the little home of the man who cleans the streets. He and his wife and family of ten children live in a house with three tiny rooms. His wife and two of his children are sick in bed.

This afternoon I am going to the funeral of a baby belonging to some neighbors who are very poor. They are strangers here and no one pays them any attention.

On Monday the college began again after the influenza and the week has been hard and eventful. The members of one of the fraternities, who have been having trouble with the president, decided to leave college. They all did leave on Thursday morning. It broke my heart to see twenty of our best boys leave just because of a misunderstanding. I made up my mind that it should not happen.

Two other teachers and I began to work to bring about a reconciliation. I was the mediator between the president and the boys. I used all of the diplomacy that I possessed. The messages were all oral. At each end of the line I tried to explain the situation in the best light. I began working at one o'clock in the afternoon and by three o'clock I had arranged for a conference. By evening the conflict was all smoothed out. The boys were all present that evening at a party given by the faculty. Of course, I didn't do it all by myself but the boys told me that they thought that I was responsible for the solution.

Anyway it is over and I am a nervous wreck. The loss of the boys would have brought about a lot of notoriety unfavorable to the college. It was over so quickly that I believe it will not get into the papers.

President Jay is to be in Philadelphia next week and as usual he left me in charge of the college. I really cannot see why he does it when there are so many men on the faculty, but he always does. I have remonstrated with him about it once or twice but he always answers that he has a right to do as he pleases about the matter. So, of course, that settles it. I have very little trouble with the students because the young people are good to me. Of course I have to conduct the chapel exercises while he is gone.

* * *

Those of us who are on the committee in this county are finding it hard to raise the War Chest Money. I suppose that a good many people feel that the time of need is over, although, of course, it is not. Every week I am being asked for money.

I am very busy--everything is piling up so terribly. I know I have undertaken more than I should. For instance, I have to give a toast at the Junior-Senior banquet this Thursday evening; next Sunday morning I am substitute teacher for a Sunday School class of fifty; I am helping prepare, or coach, the Class Play, Baccalaureate services a week from this Sunday night; then I am responsible for "Illumination Night", the Monday of the last week. All these things besides classes and examination.

When I was writing about the things I have to do, I forgot about half of them. Today I completely forgot a luncheon engagement and had to eat two meals in consequence. I really need a Social secretary. I take part in a play to be given after this.

This afternoon, at my request, President Jay consulted me about my teaching next year at the college. When I explained the matter of my going away he went up in the air completely. I was of much more value to the college than the president

was. The whole atmosphere of the college would change. He intimated that under the circumstances he would resign. If I stayed my salary would be raised from eleven hundred dollars to eighteen hundred. I could have an assistant who would do all of the work with themes and other drudgery. I would be away from the college when I liked. It was not my teaching that he wanted, although that was important. What he had to have was my influence and personality.

I tried to convince him that my dropping out would not be so awful as he thought.

I told the president that in case I should stay next year I should be away all summer and could be of no help to him in getting ready for next year's work. He replied that I could do just as I liked.

I consulted my sister and my brother-in-law. They seemed to feel that under the circumstances I should be justified in staying here.

I told the president that I would be here one more year in case my terms were complied with.

* * *

Members of the college faculty now go on extension trips every week. This last week I was assigned to Felicity, Ohio. In order to get there I must go to Cincinnati on Friday morning at ten o'clock. There I take a trolley car for my destination. When I arrive I give two recitation periods from 4:30 p.m. to 8:00. I stay all night in Felicity. In the morning I go to Cincinnati and stay there until the two o'clock afternoon train. Then I get home Saturday evening at four.

Also, every other week I go to Aberdeen, Ohio, which is just across the river from Maysville, Kentucky. My lectures at both places are different. At Felicity I give Public Speaking and English. In Aberdeen I give Sociology and English Poetry. My pupils in both places are school teachers.

Wilmington College had taken over the old Lebanon University field of Extension.

Lebanon had depended upon her contact with active teachers in their spring and summer sessions. No district was too remote or too backward but what the Lebanon faculty found the place and sent a professor to establish a course of study for the teachers there.

In the war years of 1917 and 1918, young men school teachers were drafted into the Army or absorbed in military industries. The Ohio law made a certain amount of college credits requisites for teachers certificates. Also, many young men teachers had their liabilities suspended if they engaged in agriculture. When Wilmington College took over the Lebanon school we cautiously took into our faculty the few professors whose qualifications were of the highest character. Practically every Wilmington College professor whose courses could be adjusted to the Extension work responded to the call.

During the first spring term in 1919, forty students came to Wilmington College as a result of the extension work of this first year. The number of students

in the spring term in 1920 rose to one hundred and twenty-one, in 1921 it rose to one hundred and fifty-seven, in 1922 it was one hundred and ninety-seven and it kept soaring year after year to reach three hundred and fifty-nine in 1926 and three hundred and seventy-one in 1927.

Sometimes those of us on the faculty of Wilmington College would teach during the daylight hours and then drive to some small village in Southwestern Ohio and meet with a group of local teachers. We traveled over mud roads, stony roads, and hilly roads to little groups of school teachers from rural districts. But you could carry to them inspiration as well as information. Their average age was much greater than our pupils in the college courses.

If there was snow or rain, sometimes I did not get back to Wilmington until the next day but I always felt that my mission was worthwhile for me.

The Ohio State had raised its requirements for the certification of teachers, both in elementary and high schools. The remote students could not have fulfilled the requirements if the extension courses had not been taken to them.

I feel that this is my last year of teaching. I want to stop while I am not in my decline. The college authorities said that they could not let me go, but I told them definitely that this is my last year. I am leaving a good position where my salary is easily earned, but I do not wish to get in a slump where people would say that I was slipping. A new adventure would be more absorbing than an old experience.

When I retired from teaching literature I thought I would make a list of significant passages to hold in my memory against the evil days when my mind declined. To my surprise I find that I remember the un consequential and forget the significant. My mind is a strange deceiver. It hoards the poor and trivial but flings away grave facts and important texts.

* * *

Tuesday noon I was sitting before my fire reading Shakespeare when a knock came at my door, and a man entered saying that he had bad news for me. Raymond Gregory, one of our graduates, had been found dead and his wife wanted me to come to her immediately. He said he would take me. We found Stella, the wife, in great distress. Raymond was alone in the house when he died, and there were some circumstances that made it seem it might have been suicide, but the physicians decided that the cause of his death was an acute spell of indigestion. Raymond had very original religious views, and Stella knew that he would not want a regular funeral sermon so she asked me to take charge of the funeral! I dearly loved Raymond. He was already married when he was a student at the college and was much older than the usual student. He was very clever, and I enjoyed him thoroughly. He received from Wilmington the scholarship to Haverford where he also took a B.A. degree. Then he received a Master's degree from Harvard, and a Ph.D. from Ohio State. At the time of his death he was living in the country and was hoping to get some of his articles printed in magazines, but he had not as yet succeeded,

although some of his work was very good I thought. I stayed with Stella until seven o'clock and then came home on the train, getting here about ten at night. It was a strenuous day for me for I had spoken in High School Chapel in the morning on the "Social Value of an Education", and the whole day was altogether out of the ordinary.

I went to the Friends Church at Martinsville, where the services were to be. I discussed Raymond's life from the standpoints of the student, the friend, and the man.

Raymond's wife told me that I had comforted her unspeakably, and that I had done enough good in that half-day to justify my existence.

* * *

In August, 1929, I read in a newspaper of the death of Thorstein B. Veblen at the age of seventy-two. The article mentioned that he was the managing editor of the Journal of Political Economy and also the editor of the Dial Magazine in New York City.

Since I was one of a class of two women in his course at the University of Chicago in 1894, I had been aware that he had published a book five years later entitled 'The Theory of the Leisure Class'. I have never read it because I never did understand theoretical or high-brow specialties. But the mention of Thorstein Veblen's name in the paper took me back thirty-five years to the little alcove in the library of the University of Chicago where Jane and I were the only pupils in Veblen's class.

The article in the paper about him said that he had died insolvent purposely but that the intangible assets of his writing still had power over us and the influence of his ideas had grown with the years.

As I look back I can recall that he was the second generation of a family which came from Norway because they had been expelled from a little farm there on which their family had been tenants for generations. He had avoided becoming a substantial citizen of the middle-class type who owned property. His way of seeing things was so different from ours that he preferred women in his classes because they would be less demanding than young men. Veblen had a hatred for the values of the middle-class American financial operator.

A few weeks after the death of Thorstein Veblen the United States suffered the great depression. Then people who had mocked his ideas began to say "This is what Veblen was talking about all of the time." His books began to be in demand and they still have the best chance of survival. His ideas have outlived him. He did not live to see his vindication. It seems strange to me that thirty-five years ago I was the unconscious pupil of a prophetic genius.

Veblen founded no school of thought but he influenced many scholars and public officials. His views on waste and lag appealed to several academic minds. His essays on international relations are still meaningful. He remains a source of astonishing relevant insights. For Veblen the unalloyed research scholar was the

entire excuse for a university to exist at all. He abjured open faculty conflicts and his books were aimed at one object which was the academic administrator together with his masters the business men trustees.

After I began getting the letters inquiring about his teaching, I learned that foreign visitors to the University often wanted to be shown the room where Veblen taught. Furthermore I, with astonishment, read a speech delivered by Wesley C. Mitchell of Columbia University in which he said --"No other emancipator of the mind from the subtle tyranny of circumstance has been known in social science, and no such enlarger of the realm of inquiry."

It is hard to recognize an emancipator of the mind in the broad light of daily contact for genius shines with more splendor in the night of the past. Not only is fame too often denied to men of genius during their lives, but often their means of subsistence is inadequate. I know now that Veblen dissected the situation of our country in his day with a scalpel so keen, so exact that the students and even the faculty did not realize the acuteness of his analysis. He was a man with no small talk, and perhaps due to unfortunate experience did not reveal the sharp, clear prism of his mind.

Veblen did not seek large classes and if he could interview the prospective students beforehand, he tried to scare them out of his course. The result was that there were only two of us in the class I attended, and I was there because I had not notified him beforehand of my sudden intention to take his work.

I now know that if I had put down on paper even fragments of what he said I would have something that would be valued today by scholars everywhere. The reasons why I was not on Veblen's communication line were numerous. I was brought up in Southern Ohio and had acquired unconsciously a store of ideas the validity of which I had never questioned. Existence had been easy, and I had associated in a care-free spirit with a wide variety of persons. Veblen had come from an exclusive colony of Norwegians in Minnesota. His father and mother had lost their land in Norway after it had been a free hold in the family for many generations. They were scornful of the professional classes to which they attributed the loss of their land. Veblen to them was a never-do-well because he was neither a farmer nor a preacher.

At the time when I was a student under the three professors, Veblen, Vincent, and Dewey, they were all under forty years of age and had all written books. I did not read the books myself but I talked with students who had read them. Dr. George Vincent had written a text-book on government which brought him to the attention of public administrators. He eventually became president of the University of Minnesota, where he wielded a wide influence. John Dewey's writings were read not only in the United States but all over the world where he was regarded as one of the two or three American philosophers whose books were worthy of attention. Thorstein Veblen's books were published at his own expense, and their sale was so small that they were financially a net loss to him. Instead of increasing his circle of admirers they reduced the number of his supporters. He died in obscurity. It seems strange to me now that years after I was a

pupil of these three men Veblen's books have the best chance of survival. All three men are dead. As is the case with worthwhile teachers, what they taught was an insignificant part of what they communicated. There was a delay of many years in my appreciation of their true stature, but today I at last realize what shining marks they left on my mind. I have found the old saying true -- "They are not dead who live in memory." * * *

When I was in college there was a country boy named James Harvey who was a good student and wrote poetry. His parents lived in an isolated house far back from the main roads. He had two older brothers who had left the old homestead and made their way in city life. The oldest brother was Eli Harvey who had become a sculptor and lived in Paris. The other brother Seth had married Alice Miller who had graduated from Wilmington College and had a wonderful voice. This couple lived in California.

James Harvey stayed down on the remote farm with his parents. At the age of thirty-one he went to visit his brother in Paris. On his way back to the farm he stopped in Brooklyn to visit another relative and married a woman named Ida Zeitlow. In a few months he brought his wife back to the isolated farm where his parents lived. I thought that James might appreciate some local courtesy to his wife and I invited her to my home. She seemed very intelligent and I found that she had read a good deal and we fell into a discussion about books. Down on the remote farm they had to hitch up and drive a distance to get their mail. No other house was visible from their home. She was not a handsome woman and probably weighed fifty pounds more than her husband but she was good-natured and jovial.

We saw each other several times and I was horrified to hear that she was dead. Her husband had driven to town to report to the county coroner. The officers hurried out to the farm. Dr. Wire found that the woman had been dragged to an upstairs room, that her clothing was soaked with water and that there were contusions and abrasions on her body. The post-mortem disclosed that her neck was broken.

James Harvey made a confession about the death of his wife and said that after her death he had carried her upstairs and laid her on the bed. His confession was doubted because his wife weighed fifty pounds more than he did and the stairway was narrow. However, he was indicted and put in jail.

The case took a new turn when his father was also arrested and put in jail.

The lawyers for James' defense came to our house and asked me what I knew about him. I told them that I liked him; he wrote poetry but so far as my observation went, he was a perfectly all-right fellow. I was subpoenaed to be a character witness. The room at the courthouse on every day of the trial was crowded to suffocation.

When I was put on the stand as a character witness the attorney asked me where I lived. I said "in Wilmington, Ohio." He said "Whose daughter are you?" I was only in my early twenties and not accustomed to legal routine. I said "You know very well that I am Levi Mills' daughter, you go past my house every day."

The audience laughed. They knew that the lawyer was following legal procedure to give information to the jury. I felt embarrassed and after answering some more obvious questions I went back to my seat.

I felt better after the lawyer questioned the next witness who was my jovial friend, Charley Haney. The lawyer asked him if James Harvey was in the habit of whistling when he was around by himself. Charley replied "Indeed I do not know, I have never been with him when he was by himself."

James received his sentence with the same calmness and apparent indifference that had characterized his conduct throughout the trial. He was not in the least moved as far as outside appearance was concerned.

The court asked Harvey if he had anything to say why sentence should not be passed upon him. He said "In reference to the testimony of my sister-in-law, it is perfectly groundless. There was nothing said by my wife at that time that showed there was anything wrong whatever regarding my actions with her.

"Had there been an opportunity given me during the trial to make a statement on the witness stand, I should have given it.

"There are other things on which I should have spoken, but under the advice of my attorney, it would not be proper now."

When James Harvey was in the Columbus prison he was made editor of the penitentiary paper. He also became the leader of the Glee Club. After a few years had elapsed he was paroled and went West without returning to Wilmington.

Forty years later, in 1936, I was seated in my house when a car with a California license stopped. A young man came to the back door and knocked. I asked him to come in. When he was seated he said that he was a son of Seth and Alice Harvey and he had never been in the East before.

I asked "Is Seth still living?" "Yes" he replied, he is now in a nursing home."

I asked if his mother, Alice Miller, still had her beautiful singing voice. He told me that she was dead.

The young man said "I have just learned for the first time that my mother graduated at Wilmington. My father and mother never told me anything about my Ohio background." I said "If your father and mother did not speak about it perhaps I should keep silent." He said "Please don't. I have worried about it all my life and I wondered why they never talked about it."

At his entreaty I told him what I have already mentioned above about the trial of James Harvey. The young man did not cry but tears came into his eyes. Then he said "It is so much better than I feared. I have had the most awful visions of what happened in my family in the days past.

"I know Uncle Jim. He lived in the same town that I did. I thought that it was strange that he should be a brother to my father. My father was brilliant."

I said "When they were in college together it was recognized that Jim had the better mind."

"What happened to him?" the young man asked.

"You might remember that he took upon himself alone the guilt that I think

his father and mother were very much involved in. He absorbed a punishment that might have included both his mother and his father."

When the young Harvey from California left me he took both of my hands in his and sobbed out his gratitude. He said that all these years he had worried desperately about this. Now he had found someone kind enough to tell him the truth.

* * *

I began teaching at Wilmington College in 1905.

I have served under three presidents. Albert J. Brown from 1905 to 1912, Samuel H. Hodgins from 1912 to 1915, J. Edwin Jay from 1915 to 1925. This is a total of twenty years.

I am retiring at the age of fifty-one. Some persons have called attention to the success of some of my former students.

When I hear of the accomplishment of former students I must take into consideration all of them--those that succeeded and those who did not.

I am convinced that in the cases of the brilliant students they were in essence the same persons when they came to college that they are now. The one who was a campus politician as a sophomore is a real politician now.

Some graduates when they return to the college thank me for what they got here. But I have learned not to inquire too strictly into what this acquisition was. The example that they might give may be something that I cannot recall because it happened in another class. Some former student may be incredibly kind in naming a book that I recommended. It may be that I have changed my mind about the author or even that I never read the book.

I have come to think that the teacher in a college can do less with a pupil's mind than the teacher in the public grade schools. The pupils come in as freshmen with their patterns pretty well set.

It is a great tribute to a teacher if she puts no obstruction between a pupil and the author of a book. A professor would be content to be entirely forgotten if only his instruction led the pupil to absorb the book and forget the teacher who brought it to his attention.

The teacher of English has an advantage over the teachers of science or mathematics. The former pupil may say that he learned from you to feel the qualities of certain authors. Do not correct him if he quotes from the wrong author. It is enough that he connects you with a book and you accept this identification with a blush.

When I retired from teaching I was interested if I read in the newspaper some accomplishment of a former pupil. But I have learned not to give myself credit for the success of my students.

The average student took four or five courses and I cannot assume that my course was the one that brought him success. For instance, Tom Kelly attained national recognition in religious philosophy and I cannot pretend that I ever said

a word to him on that subject.

I met the other day a former student of mine who had an enthusiasm for ideas and a zest for life. Now he seems to have neither enthusiasm for ideas nor eagerness for life. Shall I claim that his low spirits were caused by my instruction?

When I began to teach English I was astonished by the discovery that young people as a class enjoyed serious themes more than those of lighter vein.

Also I found out that good religious poetry such as the book of Job was more likely to be justly appreciated by the undevout student than by the devout.

As my former pupils grew older some of them became the men and women that I wanted them to be and some of them did not. But I found myself rather unjust in that their later station in life did not alter my early opinion of them for better or for worse. When one of them became a minister and called on me I should have felt the burden of my sin more but I did not.

When one of them became head of the department of English in a University I should have accepted him as an authority on literature but I did not.

When one of them came from prison I should not have maintained the illusion of his waste but I did.

I have often been surprised at the fact that out of a poem I remember trivial phrases but forget the rest. For instance a play called "Monna Vanna" had in it a line "But oh the bluer blue, that greener green", meaningless.

It sounded meaningless but it was the way the heroine expressed how the coming of love revived the world.

"Memory, that strange deceiver! Who can trust her? How believe her while she hoards with equal care the poor and trivial, rich and rare, yet flings away, as wantonly grave fact loveliest fantasy."

My students also, when I have heard from them in later life, never quoted anything that I intended for them to remember, but always something that was unintentional on my part.

* * *

In 1935 on my sixty-second birthday I received a letter from a man who graduated from Wilmington College in 1888.

He was a senior when I was a freshman. His family had gone through a financial crisis and had moved to Detroit. He joined his parents there immediately after graduation in order to help them. He was my crush of preparatory school days.

Now after all of these years I receive this letter:

"I remember that on the college campus as a young girl you left a group of girls sitting under a large maple tree near the college gate and ran down the walk to meet me as I returned for the afternoon.

"The first time that I had taken any particular notice of you was a short time earlier after a rehearsal of "The Chimes of Normandy" in the auditorium of the City Hall. I waited outside, intending to ask to see you home but I lacked

the courage. While I hesitated another boy stepped up ahead of me.

"One Sunday evening I took you home and as we stood in the doorway the snow fell thickly around us. I stroked the end of a fur you were wearing around your neck. I did not wish to leave and yet I was not daring enough to take your hand.

"There I first experienced what I think may properly be named as the awakening of love. It can never be the same a second time.

"This was followed by other experiences, whose location I remember. The old bridge over the creek which flowed across South Street near the mill; a drive one evening in June to the high school commencement in Sabina; sitting together in my seat in College Assembly Room at an evening entertainment; a day at Fort Ancient when the rain came down in torrents as we walked back to the horse and buggy over wet and muddy fields with the girls holding their skirts above their knees.

"Life is strange and I think it sometimes plays mean tricks. I was a Senior and you were a Freshman in Wilmington College.

"When I dream of these olden times sixty-two years fall away. One has reveries of many happenings in one's past years, but a few memories have a place apart and are sacred for all time.

'My family had moved away from Wilmington before I finished my senior year. I remained there until I graduated and then joined my family in Detroit. The distance between our ages; the geographical distance between us, and the financial crisis in my family are hard on the dreams and visions of youth. Little did we as a couple realize what the future would bring us."

Little does this man know how much he meant to me after he was gone. I did not know it myself when he went. On the college campus there was a tree under which we often walked. After he was gone, I called it "our" tree for all of the succeeding years. He may have felt that the heavy debts of his father were his primary obligations, but this did not seem serious to me. I found out after he left that I was in love with the man and not the money. The opera glasses that he gave me are the treasured possession of my life. I had the impulse to go to him after he moved away, but I was only eighteen and confident that we had a future.

* * *

In 1928 I was awarded a scholarship to the Woodbrooke School near Birmingham, England.

This was my one and only ocean voyage. I chose to sail from Philadelphia on a slow boat because I prefer comfort to speed. The Merion is a large vessel of 11,635 tons and is very steady in the water and can carry a large cargo, on this trip the load is made up of 350 head of live cattle.

One of the pictures that I remember is the coast of Ireland. About four o'clock in the morning one of my friends sent word for me to come on deck and

see this sight.

As we approached Liverpool the customs officer passed pamphlets explaining what contraband we should declare. Before I left Wilmington a friendly druggist had given me a small vial of perfumery. I could not remember where I had put it. When the customs officer came to examine my baggage I told him about the perfume. While he got deeper into the trunk his face got redder and his breath shorter. Finally he found the tiny bottle and when he saw how small it was, he uttered words that I had never heard before. I feared that the friendship between England and the United States would be ended.

While I was in Woodbrooke College near Birmingham, England, the annual session of the London Yearly Meeting was held there. I regarded it as a stroke of good fortune. It was not often that the Yearly Meeting was held outside of London and now it was to be right at my door.

I had been a clerk at our Yearly Meeting in the United States and we always read the Epistle from England with awe. Now it was to be in Birmingham. I entered the opening session in the meeting house with awe and the sense of being in the fellowship of Friends. One topic came up during a discussion about the relationship between the English and the American Friends. One of the clerks read the Epistle from our Wilmington Yearly Meeting. There was some criticism of its phraseology. There was a paragraph that spoke about dedicating a new church instead of establishing a new "meeting."

During this discussion Rufus Jones from the United States arose and said that the words meant the same thing. There were different interpretations of the phrases but the intention was the same in both countries.

I was very grateful to him because I was the clerk of Wilmington Yearly Meeting.

I went to the Lake district and at Rydal Mount visited the grave of Wordsworth. A party of about thirty entered the little cemetery. The frugal gate keeper sold ginger bread to many of the tourists. They stood about the grave reading the legend on the stone and scattering crumbs.

I tried to think of some quotation from Wordsworth to speak aloud but I could think of only three lines:

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy: Shades of the prison house begin to close upon the growing boy."

A middle aged gentleman in a raincoat asked me from which poem the quotation was taken.

I said that it was from the "Ode, Intimations of immortality from recollections of early childhood."

The man scorned the theory that we human beings come into the world trailing clouds of glory in childhood that fade away from us as we grow up. He said, between bites of ginger cake, that it was nonsense to think that the young boy had sight of the immortal sea that brought us thither.

I told him that whether the theory was sound or unsound was not the point. Whether it is sense or nonsense, it is poetry, and magnificent poetry from

the first line to the last — poetry than which there is none better in any language, poetry such as there is not perhaps more than a small volume-full in all languages.

* * *

My brother-in-law, Edwin J. Hiatt, owned a big lot on which he built his house long ago.

The lot north of his house was unoccupied except by a maple tree which was called the "Easy Tree" by his grandsons who found it easy to climb.

Edwin Hiatt offered to build a house for me on this vacant lot if I would make the plans and superintend the construction.

First, I named it Easy Tree Lodge. Although I was a heavy weight, I wished the house to be small, inexpensive, and comfortable, and I drew up my plans without consulting an architect. When I had finished my drawing I called in a carpenter of my acquaintance.

I told him that the over-all dimensions of the house would be twenty-four by sixteen feet not counting the pergola over the back door and the trellis over the front door.

The contractor stared at the drawing on the paper with astonishment, but I continued to explain it.

I wanted the kitchen to be a yard square so that I could sit in it on a stool and reach everything I needed for cooking, eating, and dishwashing. The contractor called it a doll house. I conceded an inch of space to him so that it was longer than it was wide by an inch.

Then I wanted a bathroom that was two feet wide and a foot and a half long with a shower in it. The inside part of the house had no rooms or doors but a partition ran through the middle between the living space and the sleeping space.

The contractor wanted the partition to go to the ceiling but I thought that this would be a nuisance. However, I conceded to him that the ceiling could be raised an inch over six feet. This was because it was then high enough for my old grandfathers clock.

Then the contractor raised the question about the boards for the partition. They came smooth on one side and rough on the other side. I liked the rough side best so I told him that I wanted the rough side toward the living room. Then I wanted the partition to be low enough that everyone could see over it.

The question of shelving then came up. By this time the contractor had fallen into the spirit of things and did not murmur. He put shelves all over the room. There were twenty-three of them in total and I could reach all of them.

The next man to come on the job was the painter and he assumed that I wanted the walls painted in the traditional white color. I said that I wished the walls to be pink. The painter was appalled at this. Everything within him seemed to revolt at a pink color on the living room. But, he painted them pink.

At Christmas time I had thirty-six callers who came stringing along for two hours and I fed them all from my kitchen which was a yard wide. On another

occasion I had seventeen guests all at once and they sat in rented chairs in my living room.

My only difficulty was with my catch-all closet which is over crowded. Each time I open it everything falls out.

* * *

"Easy Tree Lodge", the little home in which I live, is meaningful for me because of many gifts which I cannot reciprocate. My inability to match gift for gift does not depress me and I do not feel like a parasite or a beggar.

There are people (and they are an enigma to me) who are reluctant to receive gifts. They simper and act coy and say, "Oh, you should not have done it." But I always feel that they should have done it; that God loves the gracious receiver as much as he does the cheerful giver. One can know nothing of giving anything that is meaningful unless one knows how to take. In our civilization the art of giving has been made an easy task compared with the art of receiving which remains in a primitive state.

The harvest of old age in Easy Tree Lodge consists, not only in tangible gifts, but also in the memories of shared enthusiasms and of meaningful conversations. The delight of these does not vanish with time. It has a cumulative effect on the mind so that in my worst times I always felt that it was infinitely better to be than not to be.

* * *

A man knocked at my door today and I said "Come in." He said that his name was Carr and that he worked for the Dayton Journal Herald.

I said "Let's sit down and talk." "You are Professor Mills?" he asked. "No, just Mary Mills."

The reporter said "Before the Civil War there were Quakers who helped slaves escape through the underground railroad. I suppose that there were several stations in Wilmington?"

"Not so many" I said. "There was a center of operation here but in order to avoid suspicion the run-a-ways were routed through New Burlington, Xenia, and other points west of here.

"There was a tradition among Quakers that the husband of a family should never look at a run-a-way slave so that he could truthfully say that he had never seen one.

"My grandmother told me that a Quaker couple drove through Wilmington with a run-a-way slave under the buffalo robe that was in the sleigh. The Federal Agents stopped them. The Quaker husband told the agents very truthfully that he had not seen any escaped slaves. This was true because he had closed eyes and refused to look. The agents passed the sleigh through. Quakers do not lie--well, not habitually at least.

"There was one morning on my grandmother's farm when agents stopped and questioned her about escaped slaves that were in the neighborhood. She literally had not seen them although there were six sleeping in the barn at that moment.

"The agents rode on and saw two children on the way to school. They questioned the youngsters who were my mother and her younger brother. They pretended that they were too bashful to talk and would not say a word."

Mr. Carr said "You should be proud."

"No, pride is a sin", I said "and goeth before a fall."

* * *

Monday evening I attended a dinner given by one of the fraternities and after that went to a reception at the Church for a cousin of mine who is going as a missionary to Cuba. Tuesday evening I was at the college for an annual affair given by the Y.M. and Y.W.C.A. It was a most enjoyable occasion. One of the best stunts was a "Wild Animal Show" put on by one of the upperclassmen as an initiation for the freshmen boys. The audience was told that any beast they desired would be exhibited, and they called for every variety from a louse to a giraffe. Some freshman boy would be selected to impersonate the animal by movement and sound.

* * *

The play I am in is a little curtain raiser called "The Play Goers", a prelude to the play "The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife." It is by Pinero, and is very clever. A young married woman thinks she will give an opportunity for culture to her servants by sending them to the theatre. They resent her interest in them, scorn her proposal, and give notice they will leave her service. I am the cook, a stolid, ponderous sort of person with blank face and obstinate temper. It is a part that is easy for me to play. I am going to wear a pink gingham dress with black checks in it, made very full and somewhat short in order to make me look still larger than I am. I will wear a big white apron with a bib, and a chef's cap. White stockings with low heeled clumsy black slippers complete the costume.

We expect to have our family Christmas here at our house. We do not have a tree any more, but we give our presents in a different way every year, always some jolly way. I haven't planned for it yet this year. Most of the giving is for the children, but each grown up gets one family present. You see, our immediate family grew to be so large that if everybody gave to everybody it meant the giving of about two hundred and twenty-five presents.

The minds of the people we have known and loved may have been small-town minds, but they had edges. The sweet little lady who painted pink roses on cups and saucers may not have produced the kind of art that would live but it was her own production. Our boy musician who so excelled, he was hard to explain

on the basis of the size of the town. Those of our neighbors who were out of the ordinary we knew and appreciated. We had many town characters who really were individuals!

To have lived always in a small town made accessible to me a wide range of life. Our home was only two short squares from the Court House, a dignified building with large white columns across the front. In my youthful days I often went there and sat in the courtroom to hear cases tried because my father was a lawyer.

There is wind and drifted snow in winter, thunder and lightning in summer, johnny-jump-ups in spring, and fire-flies making fairy lights over the drying grasses in fall.

There are those who have loved them. The sunshine and shadow on a western hill, the patch of woods on the horizon, the old garbage man pushing his rickety little home-made wagon from door to door. The sound of the college bell.

* * *

In a moment of complete mental aberration I consented to take part in a pageant this summer. Also, I was the correspondent of the Yearly Meeting again this year for the fifteenth time. I took my report to the News Journal office. It was two o'clock in the morning when I pushed it into the slot. The next afternoon I went by train to Cincinnati where I was the guest of friends. I attended a large bridge luncheon at the Alms Hotel. Saturday night we had a family dinner in Wilmington. Monday morning I went to a breakfast of the old college crowd. Monday afternoon I corrected the proof of the Yearly Meeting minutes and checked it with the printer. Monday evening I went to a big party for the college faculty. Tuesday I entertained a lady from Providence, Rhode Island, and took her to the hotel and then to a picture show. Tonight I am having a table of bridge here.

I continue to be, in some sense at least, the life of the party. I sometimes wonder if I should be in some kind of an institution.

Sunday is Mother's Day. I do not like special days and this one in particular. It is unfair to old maids. I am treading the wine-press alone, I give up. I am tired of being noble.

A lady reporter from the Dayton Daily News came to Easy Tree Lodge and said that she came to Wilmington seeking an educational feature for their Sunday edition. She had asked the college president to refer her to some faculty member who had used unusual methods. The president gave her my address.

When she was seated she asked me about my methods of teaching. I told her that I had committed to memory some poems, and prose passages.

"Have you had experience in acting?" she asked.

I replied "On this very street where we are now sitting I once had a part in a movie film intended to advertise our town. The movie was taken on Saturday afternoon when the Main Street of our town was most crowded with shoppers

from the country. In order to give the scene more action the director of the movie told me to run down the street and in pursuit would come the whole Wilmington police force. I ran as fast as my tottery old legs would carry me and turned a corner to go to the B & O railroad station because this was the traditional path of escape for criminals. Just then the train came in and I made an effort to board it but the pursuing police seized me. My brother-in-law had been out of town for a week and was just descending from that train. When he saw me being pulled out of the coach by the law he exclaimed, "Merciful Heavens! What crime has Mary committed this time?"

The Dayton reporter continued her interview.

"I came here", she said, "to ask your opinions about college teaching and your ideas on methods in the classroom."

I said, "When you ask me to speak without preparation it gives my mind a chance to form opinions my natural way. I have accustomed myself to not knowing what my opinions are until I have blurted them out. Talking is useful to me because I do not know what my attitudes are until, on the tide of conversation, I hear opinions issuing from my mouth.

"In regard to literature I have two remarkably opposite attitudes. You might call them day time and night time attitudes. By day I encourage students to read the English classics but at night when the shades are drawn I turn to western tales.

"In the daylight there I sit
Amid rare volumes richly bound
A mine of cleverness and wit
From authors everywhere renowned.

At night their words seem flat and stale
Their weakness fills me with disgust
I take the crude hard-fisted tale
Where seven red-skins bite the dust."

"You have never married?" she asked.

"That is a great surprise and regret to me. I was intended to have a devoted husband and five children. I have not despaired about the husband yet but my expectations of children are weakening. Sometimes I am mistaken for a mother, though, and this flatters me."

* * *

Even at my age I still depend for attention on devices that are immature. For instance I have found that tottering a bit produces good social introductions. I approach the Mulberry Street entrance to the General Denver Hotel leaning heavily on my cane. The chairs in the lobby are all occupied. I stand inside the

door with a smile of bravely endured suffering on my face, but weaving a little on my feet. The air of bearing great pain with patient fortitude always works. Men spring from their chairs and lead me to the place of greatest comfort.

Often it cannot only get you a chair but also a conversation. One of the men in the lobby, evidently much interested in the state of my health, asked me in a voice much too audible, "Mary, how are your legs nowadays?"

In my youth, the fact that a woman had legs was a deep, dark secret, I was terribly shocked, and my first inclination was to faint in the old Victorian manner. But I decided against this procedure and replied in my most sophisticated tone, "They are about as well as usual, thank you." Then it came over me with telling force that this was not the attitude that mother would have wanted me to take. She would have advised me to draw myself up with great dignity and say "Sir, remember you are addressing a lady." She would have felt he could at least have said limbs!

One icy day I stood on the Hotel corner wondering if it would be safe for me to cross the street. An unknown man, seeing my hesitation, asked if he could be of any service. I have a well established theory that people like you better if you accept their kindly offers of help, so I clutched his arm and we started over the perilous path. I found it difficult to keep step with my companion's eccentric gait, and I smelled a strong whiff of alcohol. On four legs, each having personality tended toward the four points of the compass with my cane forming the center of gravity, we made our goal! I thanked him, and he seemed very proud of himself for being so thoughtful a gentleman. He said in a blurry voice--"It was nothing at all, Madam, I had a mother once!"

* * *

I have just had an eightieth birthday, and it has been an enlightening experience. I was born in 1873 on the day my mother was twenty-nine. This coincidence turned out to be a boon to frugality since, for years, one natal feast served for the two of us.

Well, time flew, as it always does, and brought me to the point where I have surpassed in years my life expectancy chart. At last my 29,300th day on earth arrived. I was just out of bed that morning when the first messenger came bearing gifts. I was sitting in my big chair putting on my stockings when I heard a slight commotion at my back door. Thinking some early-rising member of my family was seeking admission I, as usual, without any investigation called "come in" and a nice friendly taxi driver entered burdened with interesting looking packages. I was still in my nightgown with my hair in slumberous disorder, but we both were sophisticated mortals so neither of us blinked an eye. Indeed he seemed rather fascinated but whether with admiration or consternation I'll never know. "This is what one comes to when one is eighty" I murmured. He certainly had a quick tongue. "Many happy returns of the day," he gasped, and beat a hasty retreat.

He was but the forerunner of other carriers, and quickly my delightfully

cozy Easy Tree Lodge looked like a flower garden, a bank, a post office, a dress shop, and still other marts of trade. I soon was reduced to the weepy stage, but finally dried my tears to array myself for the family dinner given in my honor, where the food was delicious and the companionship heart-warming. We all joined in singing complimentary songs about Mary--"It's a grand old name."

I used to picture old age as something to be welcomed. From dewy morn till starry eve I was to wear white satin broadcloth. I was to be calmly beautiful with a far away look featuring a wistful smile. It hasn't turned out that way. Arthritis slipped up on me. Anyway I am glad to say that I have a sort of special kind, a bit out of the ordinary, not too much pain, but a creeping insidious locking of motion. I may have spent too much of my youth in a praying position; in any case my knees have gone back on me. Even walking across my room is now an excursion. But, thanks be, I can still make the trip! I spend quite a bit of my time thinking up lurid adjectives to apply to this fiendish disability, and I have come up with some pretty hot ones! But, notwithstanding my growing demobilization, I think myself a much favored woman. I am surrounded by dear relatives who truly love me and who spend time, thought, and energy in making me comfortable and happy. I "live alone and like it." I get to do what I want to do when I want to do it. From my windows in summer I have a view of lacy green swaying trees, and in the winter of romping boys and girls on their happy-go-lucky way to school. I spend many hours reading and watching the world go by on my cherished television. The telephone brings me daily friendly greetings that convince me I'm still alive. When I get to wondering if my life has really been worthwhile, some one of my old pupils stops a moment to remind me of some little act of kindness and of love, and "Then my heart with pleasure fills and dances with the daffodills!"

I have had already more time on earth than most people have, and I naturally wonder about my future. I have always had a child-like trust that I would spend eternity in the best place there is, because my father and mother would not be contented even in Heaven without me, and they would do their best to have me admitted. This idea gives me hope!

But I don't want to leave Easy Tree Lodge yet awhile. I love life! I am still having a wonderful time. I am the luckiest woman I know!

Now at eighty years of age sometimes at night, and especially on a night when rain is tapping on the window panes, I turn off the light and in the darkness I think of the people who made up my childhood world. I remember the tender love in my mother's revealing eyes as she read me to sleep. I think of my father so human and understanding. What a serene and beloved childhood I had. In my last drowsy moments I can hear the ringing of my old school bell. Then in a lightning flash of revelation I realize that the motives and themes of my whole after life were present in those now dreamy moments.

* * *

The Wilmington paper of May 25, 1956, contained an item entitled "Miss

Mills' Cottage Donated to Youth."

Easy Tree Lodge, the cottage so long occupied by Miss Mary Mills, was moved to Quaker Knoll on Lake Cowan to become a lodge at the Young Friends resort.

Miss Mills, who gave so many years of her life teaching young people here, could have no more fitting memorial than this contribution to the Young Friends activities in this area.

So long as she lived she continued her interest in youth. She loved having them visit her in the little cottage built particularly for her and gave freely of her time and energy to anything she could do in the interest of young people.

Young Friends were close to her heart and this gift of her home to Quaker Knoll will be a constant reminder of her love of all youth.

The Wilmington News Journal had been publishing a series of editorials about the men who had been school superintendents and educators here. The editor received a note from a fine friend (herself a teacher) suggesting that there had been women teachers who also played a significant part in the education of this area.

The editor had received numerous letters, telephone calls, and conversations inquiring when he was going to write about Mary Mills. He responded in his paper as follows: "Happily, often of late and oftener through the years I have written and spoken of Miss Mills' influence as a teacher and have thus not felt the need of hurrying to say more about her.

"Scores of her students have compared notes since her passing and have related personal experiences to illustrate her personality and her instructional practices.

"One of her former pupils was in my office recently and told me about Miss Mills' methods, which in his case, though drastic, produced the results that an ardent teacher desired. He said "She gave me good marks on my written themes and stories but she criticized me on my spoken language.

"Once I was scheduled to speak to the joint association at the college. Miss Mills told me pointedly "I am going to sit on the front seat and if you make a mistake in English, I am going to stand up right then and correct you."

"I wrote out my talk beforehand and learned it verbatim. I strode out on the platform and saw that Miss Mills was sitting where she threatened to be."

"Mary Mills remembered her pupils without illusion - fancying that they later had not altered much for better or worse. If one of her pupils became a doctor it was hard for her to accept him as a medical authority rather than a pupil. If another of her pupils became a minister and an influence in the church and State, it was difficult for her to forget him as he was in her class where his scholarship was questionable.

"What her pupils did after graduation did not alter her opinion of them for better or worse. One of them became head of a department of English at a university but she did not accept him as an authority on literature.

"One of her pupils went to prison but she still ranked him highly as a member of her class and corresponded with him."



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